

# Arizona Academic Standards & Accountability

## Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS)

### WRITING SCORES

#### The New State Board of Education Ruling How to Determine if a High School Student “Passes” AIMS Writing

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In the November 2000 meeting of the state Board of Education, it was ruled that there will be two methods by which a student can “pass” High School AIMS Writing. The first method, which is the original and only method used to date, is to have a scale score of “500” or better on the overall AIMS Writing subtest; i.e., the student “Meets the Standard” or “Exceeds the Standard.” The second method, adopted by the Board on November 27, 2000, is to score within the “Approaches the Standard” category (i.e., 431-499) on the overall AIMS Writing subtest, AND to have an *average* trait score of “4” or above on the Extended Writing (or essay) portion of AIMS Writing. There has been some confusion as to how to determine this score, which we hope to clarify with this memo.

On the report are the Writing Trait Scores for which 6 points are possible for each trait. Add these six scores, divide by 6, and then round to the nearest whole number. The rounding rule to be used is as follows:

If the resulting score from dividing is **3.5 or above**, round up to 4. If the resulting score from dividing is **less than 3.5**, round the result to 3.

PLEASE NOTE: The rounding rule we are using means rounding to the nearest “ones” place value; i.e., 3 or 4. If, in dividing, you get a number such as 3.473, the first number to discard (from right to left) is the 4 in the tenths place. The 4 is less than 5. Therefore, discard all the numbers after the decimal and keep the digit in the ones place; 3.473 rounds off to 3. The same is true if your result from dividing is 3.4999. This number also rounds to 3.

Another simpler method of calculating a “passing” score is to add up all six-trait scores. If the result is “21” or above, AND the student has an overall AIMS Writing scale score of 431 to 499, the student has met the criteria for AIMS Writing.

On the page following is an example.

# SAMPLE

## WRITING

**Your student scored 480 APPROACHES THE STANDARD (431-499)**

	Average Score	Falls Far Below the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Meets the Standard	Exceeds the Standard
<b>Your School scored</b>	448	22%	62%	10%	6%
<b>Your District scored</b>	448	22%	62%	0%	1%
<b>ARIZONA scored</b>	454	30%	51%	19%	0%

### YOUR STUDENT'S RESULTS BY CONCEPT (points obtained/total points)

W-P1 Grammar/Mechanics	3/7	W-P4 Informational Report	4/8	Total Writing Score	39/56
W-P2 Persuasive Writing	12/17	W-P5 Formal Communications	8/8		
W-P3 Literary Analysis	6/8	W-P6 Narrative Writing	6/8		

### Writing Trait Scores (6 points possible for each trait)

<b>Ideas &amp; Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Voice</b>	<b>Word Choice</b>	<b>Sentence Fluency</b>	<b>Conventions</b>
3.5	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.0

**Use THESE numbers!**

**Step 1: Add the six scores of the Writing Traits:**

$$3.5 + 4.0 + 4.0 + 3.5 + 3.5 + 3.0 = 21.5$$

**Step 2: Divide the total by 6**

$$21.5 \div 6 = 3.58$$

**ADD first,  
THEN divide**

**Step 3: Round to the nearest whole number**

$$3.58 \rightarrow 4$$

**Don't forget the  
rounding rule!  
(on page 1)**

This high school student, who has a scale score of 480 (Approaches the Standard), has an *average* Six-Trait score of "4". Therefore, this student has "passed" High School AIMS Writing and will not have to retake this portion of AIMS.